Performance appraisal interviews with support of learning management systems - A study of preschool principals’ experiences

Master thesis Patrick Dorl

Background
The digitalization of Swedish preschools can be shown by three different indicators:
- the on-going revision of the national curriculum for preschool where children’s digital competences will be added
- the research about how digital devices (e.g. tablets) are used in preschools
- the introduction of learning management systems designed for preschools

Aim
Get a better understanding in which way preschool principals experience that they can use their learning management system in conjunction with performance appraisal interviews with their employees

Theoretical framework
Activity theory, in particular Engeström’s Activity system and Cycle of Expansive Learning

Two interacting activity systems as minimal model for the third generation of activity theory (Engeström, 2001, p.136)

Cycle of Expansive Learning (Engeström, 1999, p. 384)

1. Questioning the old practice with pen and paper
2. Analysis: employees are hardly prepared, preschool principals don’t experience a dialogue
3. Development of an interview guide in the learning management system
4. Examining and testing the new processes and the new interview guide
5. Implementation: using the learning management system for the interviews
6. Reflecting about those new processes
7. Consolidation by adjusting those processes and the interview guide

Results

Conclusion
Learning management systems can be used both as a communication and an administration tool to realize two of the principals’ outcomes with performance appraisal interviews: to increase the speech time for the employees and to give them possibility to see their own professional development.